

The Mystery of The Devil's Ace

Or, The Manor Mystery

By Fergus Hume

Author of "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab."

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CHAPTER XI.

(Continued.)

The Clash.

"No, father," cried Dorothy, irritated that she should be thus reduced to a puppet. "I shall marry an honest man, and a man whom I love. You have money now, so I refuse to be sold."

"Child, do you dare to set your will against mine?"

"Yes, father. I have no wish to quarrel, but I am a human being and not a doll. My life's happiness is my own affair."

"I wish you to be happy, Dorothy, but—"

"Then permit me, father, to choose a husband for myself."

"Come, come," cried Lady Panwin sternly. "This is not the way to speak to your father. And you, Francis, have no right to coerce the girl into doing anything against her feelings. As to the marriage, that must wait until your character is cleared."

"My character is above reproach," said Clair, indignantly.

"Now," replied his sister, with significance. "But how long will it remain so should Count Bezko tell this story to the world?"

"You said yourself, Selma, that he would not tell the police."

"I did. And I repeat what I said. Count Bezko is too much involved by his own confession with the Revolutionary Party in Russia to think of appearing even as a witness in an English court. But he is quite capable of whispering to your detriment that you are the assassin of Sir John. And since you have a legacy left to you, since you were near the Cuckoo's Grove about the time the crime was committed, and since the body was hidden in the crypt, people will begin to think that there is some truth in this gossip."

CHAPTER XII.

Hailon to the Rescue.

In this way the conduct of the case devolved on Hailon. After the inquiry, both the London detective and Inspector Trusk made various attempts to discover the truth, but failed to find the slightest clue to the identity of Sir John's assassin.

Count Bezko, escorted by Jules, the Manor butler, left the Manor within the hour and caught the 10.30 train to London. After a short interview with Dorothy, in which they renewed their vows, Percy returned to the Minter establishment. Here he found Willy seated in the study, busy with her story. Billy, feeling tired after a long day in the open, had retired to bed. The mid-night hour began to dawn, and a more over, Willy, being sharp, and a woman, was likely to be of great use. Percy, therefore, smoked a final pipe before going to bed, and told her of Bezko's arrival, of his accusation, and detailed the compact which Mr. Clair had made with him. Willy listened attentively to her friend, and then gave her opinion.

"The first thing you have to do is to see Mrs. Broll in Sir John's London house."

Hailon remonstrated. "You are building up theories out of nothing."

"Well," said Willy, starting into the breathless grate, "it looks like that, I confess. The whole thing is a mystery to me. Apparently, from what you say, Mr. Clair is innocent in spite of my suspicious and Count Bezko's accusation. If he were guilty, he certainly would not ask you to look into the

case. I think you had better begin by learning all you can of Sir John's past life from Mrs. Broll, and also she may be able to tell you about Richard's doings. Then there is the knife with which the crime was committed."

Hailon nodded. "A noticeable knife," he admitted. "Kind of bowie. The handle, with its red and black bands, makes it a weapon not easy to forget if once seen."

A Weird Recollection.

"And yet," said Willy, slowly. "I have seen it, and in Mr. Clair's hand."

Percy jumped up. "Good heavens! Where? When?"

Miss Minter rose and struck her hands together with a triumphant look in her eyes. "I know now. It all comes back to me. Billy and I went up to London with Mr. Clair. Dorothy would not come because she had a headache. We called on Sir John. He was in his study with Mrs. Broll, and she was describing a fight in the slums. You know, she goes to the slums."

"No, I don't. Why does she go?"

"Oh, she's mad on philanthropy."

"Mrs. Broll," said Hailon, dryly, "does not strike me as a woman likely to help the poor."

"You wrong her there," said Willy, who was quite pleased at the sudden revival of her memory. "She is really very kind to the poor, and Sir John encouraged her kindness. There is a slum in Whitechapel—a pet slum of Mrs. Broll's. On this day—in the morning—she was there, and a man was fighting with his wife. He was a Swedish sailor, and not so strong as his wife, a great brawny woman. As the sailor was getting the worst of the fight he drew the knife, and Mrs. Broll snatched it away from him. She brought it home in triumph, and was telling Sir John of her adventure, when I entered with Billy and Mr. Clair. We heard the story, and Mr. Clair took up the knife and looked it over. I remember quite well, because Billy called Mrs. Broll by the name of Penthesilea, which annoyed her."

"Are you sure that it was the same knife?"

"Absolutely! The handle struck me as so strange—red and black bands alternately. Of course, there may be another knife of that description; but it does not seem likely."

"What became of the knife?"

"He may have given the knife to some one."

"We are arguing in a circle," said Miss Minter, with a weary air, and glancing at the clock. "So say again what I said before that it will be best for you to go to London and see Mrs. Broll. Now that you know about the knife, it is more important than ever that you should see her, and learn if she missed it from the study."

Next day Percy went up to London by the 10.55, and reached Fenchurch street shortly after 12 o'clock. He then took the underground to South Kensington, and sought the house of the millionairess. It was a handsome residence on Camden Hill, situated in a large garden, shut out from the roadway by high walls of red brick. A ring at the door brought a footman, and Percy learnt that Mrs. Broll was within. He sent his card to her by the man, and shortly was conducted to the drawing-room. This somewhat surprised Hailon, as he fancied that Mrs. Broll would have received him in her own apartment. But he presumed that until the executors settled her late master's affairs she considered she had a right to the entire mansion.

In a few minutes Mrs. Broll came mimicking into the splendid room, dressed gaudily as usual.

An Apparition.

"Oh! Mr. Hailon, how are you, sir?" she cried, with her black eyes twinkling and showing most of her teeth. "I am glad to see you, sir, though I should be glad to know why you have come here. But, then, I do know. Oh, yes, I know, sir. There's no deceiving me. But how news travels so quickly I can't tell."

"What news?" asked Hailon stiffly.

"Joyful news, the very best of news. And yet—her thin mouth took on a sorrowful twist—"and news to me, who nursed them both."

Hailon wondered if he had been drinking as in spite of her gay dress, her eyes were red, and she apparently was trying to be cheerful under difficulties.

"Are you alluding to Sir John?" he asked, puzzled.

"And to Richard, who was my favorite. But he is gone."

"Richard? You mean Sir John?"

Mrs. Broll heard a sound at the door and spun round like a teetotum to face it. "Judge for yourself, sir. Here he is."

The door opened, and Percy started to his feet with an exclamation. And will he permit, for on the threshold he beheld—Sir John Newby!

(To Be Continued.)

The Bachelor Girl and "The Widow."

"THE Widow (to Say Nothing of 'The Man') has come to town. Miss Helen Rowland, of 'The Evening World,' whose 'Reflections of a Bachelor Girl' is the crispest and most sparkling anti-man epigrams of the day, is the author of this fascinating little book on the love game, just published by the Dodge Publishing Company."

In "The Widow" Miss Rowland is at her best, displaying the distilled essence of her uncanny knowledge of mere man. What the widow doesn't know about men, women, marriage and the love game isn't worth knowing, and in the startling nature of her theories, the book is a complete guide to matrimony.

The Newlyweds and Their Baby

By George McManus



Betty Vincent Gives Advice On Courtship and Marriage

He Says He Loves Her.

Dear Betty:

I AM in love with a man a few years my senior. He is constantly professing his love for me, yet I know positively that he makes engagements with other women; also receives letters from them. Do you think he really loves me? What should I do under the circumstances?

B. B.

Unless you are engaged to the man you have no right to expect him to give up his other friends and pay attention to you only. However, I think if he truly loved you he would be content with your friendship alone. I advise

She Did Not Answer.

Dear Betty:

I HAVE been going with a young lady for two years and everything went smoothly until about five weeks ago, when I invited her to spend the evening with me and my friends, but received no answer. I immediately wrote again, but still no answer. By that time I was very angry and wrote, saying that if she did not write

The Girl Objects.

Dear Betty:

FOR several months I have been keeping company with a young lady for whom I have learned to care a great deal, and although my feeling is reciprocated, the young lady refuses to become my wife because I am employed at the race track at a salary of \$15 a week. The young lady wishes me to give up my position at the track and endeavor to find a place in some mercantile establishment, even though I receive but \$20 per week. As my health will not permit me to work indoors, and I consider \$20 a week too small an amount for two people to live on, I am at a loss to know what to do. Can you help me?

C. C.

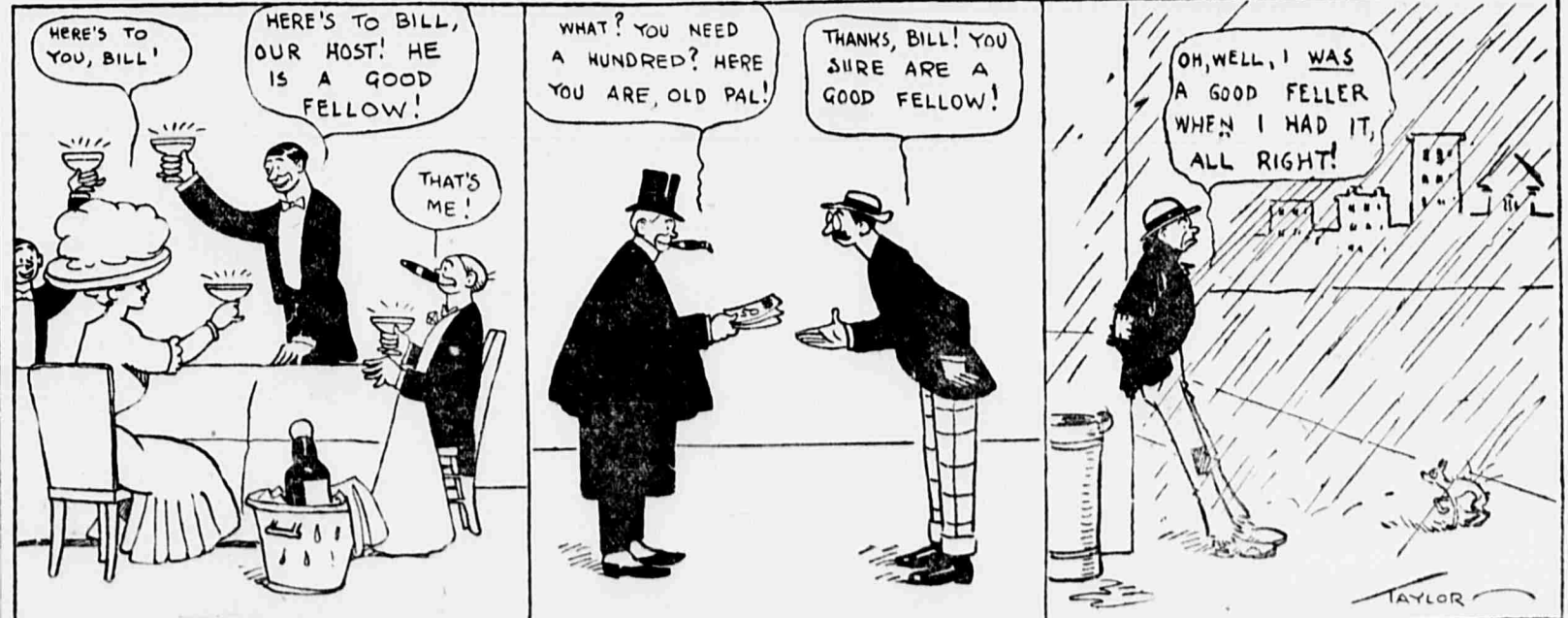
As your health does not permit you to work indoors, and I learn if she really should allow her scruples against racing to dictate to you a course which would require you to work indoors, I do not, of course, approve of gambling, but this seems to be a case where the personal equation should be considered.

Listen to the Birds By Bob Addams



He Was Good When He Had It

By R. W. Taylor



Say, once I had a bunch of dough. And I went some when I had it, bo— It's gone, like all good things go. But, say, kid—when I had it!

I had the whole bunch on my staff; That's honest, too, old pal—don't laugh! Now all they hand me is the gaff: But, say, kid—when I had it!

Old Broadway wasn't wide enough For me, bo, when I had the fluff— Tanks for the half—I need the stuff: But, say, kid—when I had it!

DEEP SEA TALES.

NO. 4. SHARKS EASTERN AND WHAT HAPPENED.

BY CAPT. J. B. WATT, COMMANDING U.S.S. LUSITANIA.

SHARKS, as nearly every landman knows, are the mortal enemies of sailors. A gale, a hurricane or even a cyclone are accepted by the deep water men with almost stolid indifference. Their proximity to a ship, even to this day, is always looked upon as an omen of ill luck of some character. So when the cook of the old clipper ship William Prows, which I was commanding way back during the early sixties, pointed astern and howled, and I saw the triangular fin of a huge man-eating shark protruding above the surface of the sea, I must confess to a feeling of uneasiness.

Soon I saw the man "forl'd" leaning over the rail at the waist and peering at the wake of the ship. Presently they broke up into small groups and fell to discussing the appearance of their dreaded foe.

I was then in the East Indian trade, running between Liverpool and Bombay. We were carrying about twenty passengers home, some of whom were returning from the Abyssinian War, which was then about closing.

The Prows had rounded the Cape of Good Hope in splendid shape and was headed up the east coast of Africa under a heavy spread of canvas in comparatively light breezes when the ominous sign stirred the ship's company.

From the occasional glimpses I got of the shark's flukes and snout I made him out to be a monster of the man-eating species, not less than eighteen feet in length.

I was naturally annoyed at the appearance of our arch enemy, that cast a gloom over an otherwise delightful passage up to that point.

"Shy something at the brute," I shouted to the cabin boy.

The lad picked up a canvas back steamer chair which an old lady passenger had been using on deck, and hove it in the direction of the shark. After swearing at the boy a few moments for selecting such a missile, I walked to the taffrail to see if it had been effective, but the chair was nowhere in sight. Well, that stumped me, as I concluded the shark must surely have swallowed it.

We had some oranges in the cargo, and, thinking that our unwelcome visitor might be satisfied with a mess of such delicacies, ordered a couple of the foremost heads to bring out a box of the fruit from 'tween decks and heave it overboard. To my surprise the oranges, box and all, disappeared as rapidly as had the chair.

Then, to make the situation more distressing, other fins began to appear in the locality, and soon there was a regular procession of them astern.

Passengers as well as crew were visibly affected by the incident, and I was at my wits' ends for a method of ridding us of the trailing devils.

The old lady who owned the chair which had disappeared made matters worse by setting up a dreadful clamor for her lost property, and going among the sailors, catching them for not "shooting the oranges away."

She had not been popular with the men from the beginning of the passage, and at no time do they take kindly to the presence of a woman on board ship. Our female passenger's appearance was against her, too, for she was old and weakened, and I thought at times a little daffy. It was not long before rumors reached me that the men "forl'd" were referring to her as a witch, and I went below that night with serious misgivings.

At daylight the following morning the



CAPT. J. B. WATT.

cabin boy aroused me with the statement that the old lady was not to be found on board. I went on deck and my first glance was directed astern. The grim parade was still keeping along in our wake.

I had the ship searched from stem to stern, on deck and below, but the old lady had surely sunk out of sight. The members of the crew acted in a very surly manner and I began to suspect that the old lady might have been urged by them to follow the chair and the oranges, for there is no telling to what lengths superstition may carry a sailor. I failed to get much information from them by either threats of keelhauling or promises of an extra allowance of grog, so turned my attention to the sharks again.

I ordered the big shark hook on deck and, attaching a line, soon had it trailing astern with a big hunk of pork for bait. Luck was with us and we had not been deking long when the boat's shout that we had hooked the big fellow.

A tackle was rigged from the main yard, and it did not take long to haul him on board. I ordered it "forl'd" and told the men to cut him open and see if there was any signs of the missing passenger in his belly.

Actually dressing that there might be, I went below to await a report. Presently the mate came dashing down the cabin companionway and yelled excitedly:

"What do you think was in that shark's belly, sir?"

"I don't know," I replied in a subdued tone, afraid almost to hear.

"Why, the old woman is a stinkin' there in her old chair a-tryin' to sell oranges to the passengers at a shillin' apiece."

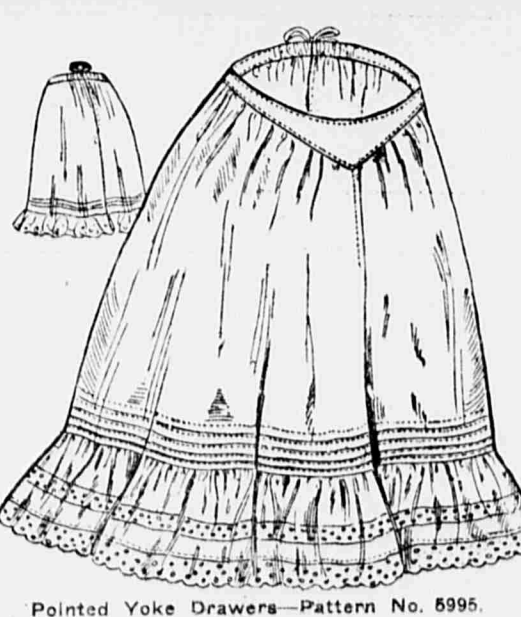
I was greatly relieved, for I knew my mate was a truthful man.

May Manton's Daily Fashions.

DRAWERS that are finished with a pointed yoke at the upper edge are apt to be exceedingly comfortable to the wearer, and many women prefer them to every other sort. Those illustrated include that feature, and are quite simple, while they can be finished with trims of embroidery or of lace. They are especially fullness over the hips, while they are quite wide enough for comfort.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is 2 yards 36 inches wide, 2 1/2 yards each of insertion and edging.

Pattern No. 5995 is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32 inch waist measure.



Pointed Yoke Drawers—Pattern No. 5995.

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